THE ASSASSINATION

OF

PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

A POEM,

BY

J. T. BREEZE,

OF BRIGHTON,

LATE OF PICTON.

BELLEVILLE:

PRINTED AT THE "INDEPENDENT" OFFICE BY JAMES T. BELL.

1865.

1607 Breeze.
1608. Breeze.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following poem on the death of the beloved and lamented President was the product of the author, on receiving the telegraphic dispatch of his assassination in Ford's theatre, and the feelings were, therefore, the spontaneous emotion of the author's mind, without being at all acquainted with the feeling of the world at large. The author at the time was prostrated under a severe fit of sickness; still, so deeply was he affected by the demon act, that he poured the feelings of his heart in song, and it was not until his wife, seeing his dangerous state, that he could be induced to relinquish the pen, which was, by a superior discretion, wrenched from his hand, and the inspiration left the mind. This was in consequence of the high regard in which the author held the President.

There was something peculiarly lovely and interesting to the mind of a poet in the spirit and character of Abraham Lincoln. It would, therefore, have been easy to write a volume on one loved so well, whose qualities of heart and head won the respect and admiration of the whole world. His amiable disposition—the simplicity of his soul—the natural purity of his heart—his characteristic frankness, and his unflinching firmness in adversity, are subjects that angels may admire, and furnish a theme for the poet and historian of more than ordinary interest, and become a lustrous example to youth through all coming time.

THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

Weep, ye countless drooping willows
That adorn Columbia's shore,
And ye forests that are waving,
Weep for him who is no more.
Shed a tear for freedom's champion,
Cradled once in liberty,
And has died a noble martyr
By the hand of Slavery.

He was born beneath your shadow,
Rambled o'er your verdant grove,
And aspired to rule the nation
Whom the nation's heart doth love.
Stay, proud billows of the ocean,
Throw your tears towards the shore,
Hush your voice to weep in sympathy
With your country's tears of gore.

O! ye skies of lovely beauty,
Draped in many a gorgeous hue,
In the depths of poet's passion
I would claim a tear from you.
Change your garments with the widow
Whose heart bleeds of untold grief
From a wound no human power
Can afford the least relief.

Come all nature, as the life-buds
Now adorn the bursting spring,
From the glorious floral kingdom
You may choicest roses bring,
To clothe the grave of Abraham Lincoln,
Come and bleed your tears of love,
As the darkened heavens may aid you
With their dew-drops from above.

O! ye hurried rivers bounding
Through the deep enchanting main,
Stop to listen to your country
Groaning all her woes again.
'Mid the throes that rent her bosom

With calamity and woe,
Here's another dispensation
That she has to undergo.

Weep, ye noble sons of genius,
Brother poets, bleed a tear,
Let the glories of your talents
Break through grief to assemble here.
As the rainbow and its lustre
Breaks more beauty through the cloud,
So may genius that is darkened,
As your nation's head is bowed.

Come, do homage to his memory,
He's a genius of your soil,
Whose devoted powers reflected
Honour with his mental toil,
He is worthy of your powers,
And your deep inspiring thought
Stamp your song with words of music
That may never be forgot.

Print his virtues on the tablets
Of your glorious history's page,
Hand them down in golden letters
With the good of every age.

Widows, now bereft of escorts
On the bloody battle plain,
Pour your prayers to the eternal
To calm one deep breast of pain.
Her beloved husband's tears
Often fell in love to you,
As your valiant loved ones perished
On the field of blood so true.

In the cause for which they perished
Has this noble veteran died,
And his memory is hallowed,
Cherish'd by the nation's pride.
Justice swayed her golden sceptre
O'er the powers of his soul,
And angelic kindness always
Did his tender heart control.

He was one of nature's favourites,
Robed with innocence and truth,
And they gave his heart the power
That sustained him from his youth.
Nature emptied her vast treasures
To empower his native mind,
To gain knowledge by observing
Principles of every kind.

Arduous mental application
Raised those powers of moral worth
To that sacred trust and honour
That have shone in glory forth.

In the meridian of their glory
His sun set, eclipsing all,
Darkness on the land is settled
By thy sad, untimely fall.
In recesses of my spirit
Whence spring love of liberty,
Lincoln, there in golden letters,
I have now engraven thee.

With the choice of every nation,
With the good of every clime,
That betimes in guileless hours,
May inspire the poet's rhyme,
As some name cut in the grass-plot,
Covered o'er with flowers pure,
Water'd by the dew of freedom,
Long as love it will endure.

Withered only when will perish
Love to God and love to truth,
Abraham Lincoln there is printed,
Blooming in immortal youth.
Army brave of the Potomac,
Ye who wield the glittering blade,
And through sleepless nights have often
Sheltered 'neath the forest's shade,

Print the name of Abraham Lincoln
On your famous conquering swords,
And in distant happy years
Drop a tear on the words.

Give it to your sons, a relic
To inspire that loyal love
To the principle he gave us
Ere he left for realms above.

When we gaze in history future,
On its calm serenic sky,
There will lie one star whose glory
Will attract the poet's eye:
As its mild shade falls upon it,
And its holy light will shine,
Pregnant there with every virtue
That falls from the throne divine.

And its deep seraphic lustre,
Calm 'mid all the storms that rise,
Firm, though heaven's own pillars tremble
'Neath the canopy of the skies.
Other stars declined their lustre,
Went to deck another sphere,
Abraham Lincoln's heart ne'er faltered
From those laws he loved so dear.

Deeply laid within his spirit
Were those principles divine,
That reflected such a splendour
From the spot where they did shine.
They adorned his humble spirit,
And he loved them as his life,
Which he spent free to support them
'Mid the thunderstorms of strife.

Nations eye him in the distance,
Gladly cast their honours down,
At his feet lies all the glory,
'Mid them gems from Britain's Crown.
Yea, they kiss the hand thus palsied
By a fiend in human form.
His benignity unfettered
Millions from oppression's arm.

Wave, thou stainless flag of freedom,
Let thy deepest foldings wave
Evermore in triple glory,
Clothed with power from Lincoln's grave.

The warm hand that now lies nerveless,
Shadow'd 'neath the forest trees,
Wiped the stain that hung upon thee
As unfolded to the breeze.

Now Columbia's flag of freedom
May unfold its form all even,
Stainless will its banner ever
Kiss the breezes of the heaven,
And the eagle in her tour,
Through the deep, expanded sky,
Stops to kiss thy stainless banner,
Emblem of her liberty.

If the white-winged angels hover
O'er the nations as they fly,
They may come to kiss the banner
That doth grace Columbia's sky.
If those holy pilgrim fathers
That first pressed New England's shore
See thee now baptized so deeply
In those floods of human gore,

They would come from graves to greet thee,
Hail thy banner stainless fly,
Guide the soul of Abraham Lincoln,
As it marches to the sky;
Seat him 'mong them 'mid the glory
That adorns Jehovah's throne,
Millions gazing as the martyr
Enters to that bliss unknown.

At the helm, when livid lightnings
Threat to seal his country's doom,
And the dreadful thunders pealing,
Darkness deep enhancing gloom.
Foes within the very vessel
As he firmly guides the helm,
Threatening, as the waves were tossing,
The proud ship to overwhelm.

On his God and on his country
Firmly then he fixed his eye,
Leaning on an arm almighty,
Calm in any danger nigh.

Not more gloriously did Abraham
Rescue Lot and all his host
From the five kings that assailed him
On Arabia's rugged coast,

Than did Abraham Lincoln rescue
Man from slavery and woe
While the god of battles emptied
All his vials on the foe.
Future years shall bless his memory
Millions yet shall kiss his name,
And successive ages hand it
Down with pure immortal fame.

Rest, dear man, in peaceful slumbers,
All thy glorious work is done,
Wear the wreath of sacred glory,
That thy own proud deeds have won.

THE ASSASSIN.

Be that muscle palsied ever,
Wither may its demon power,
That was raised to mar thy glory,
'Fore which thy fond life did cower.
Why not ministering spirits
Paralyze the traitor's hand?
Why not mark the foul assassin,
Cain-like, with the murderer's brand?

Be his days but few and troubled,
Troubled by that sting of woe
That the conscience, when unfettered,
Must for ever undergo.
May the thorny pillow woven
Pierce him in the throes of death:
God alone have mercy on him
When he may resign his breath.

Goodness, truth, and virtue leave him,
Hate his act for ever more,
May his name and memory perish
From Columbia's favoured shore.